

**HAMPTON PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION**  
**HAMPTON TOWN HALL, 164 ROUTE 97**

**PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING**

Monday, February 19, 2024 7:00 PM  
COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM and Via ZOOM  
Hampton Town Hall  
164 Main Street, Hampton CT

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Grindle called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**2. Roll Call/Seating of Alternate Members**

Seated for the meeting were Commissioners Gary DeCesare, Ev Hyde, Stan Crawford, and Sue Hochstetter. Also in attendance were Alternates Kathy Thompson, Peter Serafin, Town Planner John Guskowski, and several members of the public.

**3. Audience for Citizens:** *Citizens may address the Commission on items not otherwise on the agenda*

There was no input from citizens at this point.

**4. Approval of Minutes:** January 22, 2024

Minutes were not posted with the meeting materials and will be addressed at next month's meeting.

**Motion to move the New Business item 6a to be addressed ahead of the Public Hearing by Chairman Grindle, seconded by Ev Hyde. Motion carried unanimously.**

**6. New Business**

a. Preliminary Discussion – Potential EastCONN Project at 170 Hartford Turnpike

Chairman Grindle noted that he was a part of the design team for EastCONN, he recused himself from the discussion and turned the meeting over to Vice Chairman Ev Hyde. Eric Protulis (Executive Director) and Shawn Brodeur (Facilities Director) from EastCONN presented a preliminary plan for the acquisition and development of 170 Hartford Turnpike as an additional educational facility. Mr. Protulis presented an overview of EastCONN, one of the seven supportive educational facilities across the state. EastCONN serves 33 communities in Eastern Connecticut. Hampton is geographically central to the EastCONN service area. 170 Hartford Turnpike would provide the opportunity to build a facility that could consolidate programs that are currently in Columbia and Killingly into a central location. He presented information about the location of students coming to EastCONN programs, as well as documentation of the current facility design and structural aesthetic that would be carried forward into the new building. He then described and provided some mapping of the proposed 10-acre location at 170 Hartford Turnpike itself and some of the potential concept plans.

Ev Hyde asked whether the new building would be replacing the current Hampton facility, and Mr. Protulis stated that it would not – it will be in addition to the current facility, while consolidating facilities in other towns. There was a discussion about the numbers of new employees and students and the potential traffic impacts. Mr. Protulis stated that a traffic study would accompany a full application. The majority of the students attending the facility were transported on small buses, with peaks at around 7:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. during the weekdays. The property is currently under private ownership, but is under preliminary contract with EastCONN. There are no current buildings on the property. The main new facility would be just under 100,000 square feet, over two stories. There is a residential driveway close to the proposed facility driveway, and the current resident (and owner) would remain in the residential property next door.

John Guskowski provided a brief overview of the Zoning Regulations and described the proposed use as fitting into the “Educational, instructional, religious, and museum operations and facilities” allowance via Special Permit in the RA-80 district. A full Special Permit application, including engineering drawings, traffic studies, health department reviews, and a publicly-noticed public hearing would need to be submitted and held. The Commission discussed the logistics, as well as possible other EastCONN locations. There may be a small playground and some basketball hoops. It was unlikely that there would be evening events at the new facilities.

Vice Chairman Hyde thanked the presenters. Chairman Grindle returned to the meeting.

b. 2024-25 Budget Discussion

Chairman Grindle presented the proposed budget, which increased the pay for the Zoning Enforcement Officer by \$800 and reducing the Clerk position by \$5,300 because John Guskowski has been covering minutes for the Commission. Most other items remained flat, and the overall proposal would reduce the budget by \$4,500, or about 8.7%. Stan Crawford asked about other staff members and whether a 9% increase for the ZEO would be in line with other staff. John Guskowski stated that the overall budget is being reduced and a ZEO is a valuable and hard-to-find position. The Commission discussed how to present the budget to the Board of Finance.

**Motion to approve proposed budget by Stan Crawford, seconded by Ev Hyde. Motion carried unanimously.**

5. **Public Hearing**

- a. Application for Amendment to Zoning Regulations, Proposed New Sections 5.1.C.a.k and 6.22.R, “Multifamily Dwelling Units.” Applicant: Hampton Planning & Zoning Commission (*continued from January meeting*)

Chairman Grindle reintroduced the proposed Multifamily Dwelling regulations. John Guskowski reviewed the minor text changes that were made based on prior discussion. Chairman Grindle stated that he had not reviewed the proposed regulations against some of the preliminary layouts that were discussed. Ev Hyde stated that he was uncertain about the wisdom of design standards for certain areas. Sue Hochstetter stated that she was concerned about new multifamily housing being built in the National Register of Historic Places District on Hampton Hill. Ev Hyde stated that high-end design criteria created an affordability challenge for construction. Sue Hochstetter asked about exempting the properties in the Historic District from multifamily uses. John Guskowski discussed the need to create some Zoning distinction for these properties, which are currently just treated as any other RA-80 district. There would need to be a different zone or an overlay zone. The Commission discussed the architectural and historic sensitivity of the area and how to provide an additional layer of protection for these properties. John Guskowski talked about how environmental overlay zones work in aquifer areas. Chairman Grindle stated that he would prefer to move ahead with the proposed regulations while also beginning the discussion of a historic/design overlay.

Sue Hochstetter discussed the fiscal realities of building multifamily housing and how that lent itself to a cookie-cutter approach. John Guskowski discussed potential language either banning multifamily from properties in the Historic Register District or allowing it under narrow architectural design standards. Ev Hyde stated that standards that were more understandable and user-friendly would be preferable. There was a discussion about new construction vs. conversion of historic properties and the long, narrow lots along Route 97 that would possibly be able to be developed to the rear of the existing historic homes. There was a general consensus among the Commission that, for a short term approach, the indication of the entire “orange outline” Historic Register district would be the easiest designation for eligibility.

Sue Hochstetter stated that she had concerns about the protection of stone walls along roadways. The Commission discussed whether there was existing protection of non-boundary stone walls. There was a discussion among the Commission about the PoCD goal and current regulations, which have not necessarily been updated to reflect these goals.

**Motion to close the public hearing with the addition of proposed Sections 6.22.R.22 and 6.22.R.23 concerning stone walls and the Historic Register district by Stan Crawford, seconded by Ev Hyde. Motion carried unanimously.**

## 7. **Old Business**

- a. Application for Amendment to Zoning Regulations, Proposed New Sections 5.1.C.a.k and 6.22.R, “Multifamily Dwelling Units.” Applicant: Hampton Planning & Zoning Commission

**Motion to approve the Text Amendment with the addition of proposed Sections 6.22.R.22 and 6.22.R.23 concerning stone walls and the Historic Register district by Stan Crawford, seconded by Ev Hyde. Motion carried unanimously.**

The Commission discussed the fact that the PoCD is coming up for update in 2026 and whether to start doing a questionnaire for the public. Stan Crawford noted that geothermal technology should be added to the current Plan’s energy efficiency recommendations.

## 8. **Staff Report & Enforcement Issues**

The Commission reviewed and discussed the ZEO report submitted by Jay Gigliotti and discussed the potentially unpermitted firewood business at 124 Windham Road, which was first being dealt with through the Wetlands Commission.

## 9. **Correspondence**

John Guskowski presented a letter from the CT DEEP concerning the Town’s Forest Practices regulations, which per CT General Statutes Section 22-65k(d), is the purview of the State of Connecticut. Section 6.9 of the Hampton Zoning Regulations. He explained that the Town does not regulate forest practices locally and the DEEP did not seem to recognize this in their correspondence. Chairman Grindle directed John Guskowski to note this to the DEEP and bring in the Town Attorney for consultation as needed.

Chairman Grindle discussed the potential for submission of a CT Recreational Trails Grant application for the Little River Preserve. This project was not awarded in the 2023 grant cycle and would like to re-submit for the 2024 cycle. The Conservation Commission is seeking a letter of support from the Planning & Zoning Commission. By consensus, the Commission requested that John Guskowski will prepared a letter of support for the grant.

10. **Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn by Ev Hyde, seconded by Gary DeCesare. Motion carried unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
John P. Guszkowski, AICP, CZEO  
Town Planner